KATIVIK

PRESS RELEASE

Nunavik Childcare Celebrations

Kuujjuaq, Québec – June 6th 2007 – The Nunavik childcare centers were recognized on the week of May 28th through a week long celebration. The celebrations were organized to recognize all the hard work that the childcare centre's boards of directors and employees have done over the years and to acknowledge the people who were involved in the development of the childcare centres. A Nunavik wide promotional campaign was conducted with the use of the local and regional radio stations to ensure participation from community members.

A planning session was held prior to the week of celebrations with the center directors to plan for suitable activities for the children and community. The week began with an opening prayer at each childcare center and on Wednesday, May 30th, each center held a picnic (weather permitting) or a feast for the staff, board of directors, children and their parents as well as special invited guests. Then, on May 31st, each community organized a parade around the town. Some parades included decorated vehicles and the community was encouraged to participate in the childcare parade. Key chains and tote bags were designed and ordered especially for the occasion and were distributed at each centre.

The first childcare center to open in Nunavik was the Iqitauvik Childcare Center which was run by the municipal government in Kuujjuaq on December 4, 1981. They now have two 80 place childcare centres. In 1994, the regional Pairitsivik Home Daycare Agency was opened. Later, three other communities, Puvirnituq, Quaqtaq and Tasiujaq started childcare services under their local municipal governments.

In 1995, the Employment & Training department at the Kativik Regional Government, in collaboration with community representatives, produced a position paper on childcare services in Nunavik. Federal funding was obtained through the Aboriginal Head Start program (Health Canada) and Human Resource and Skills Development Canada in 1996 to do a needs survey for childcare services in two communities.

Since 1996, funds became available to build new centres in every Nunavik community, thanks to programs and the generosity provided by the Kativik Regional Government, Makivik Corporation, the provincial, federal and local municipal governments. Each centre is individually incorporated as non-profit corporations with a board of directors composed of a majority of parent users of the services. All centres operate in Inuktitut and promote Inuit language, culture

and traditions. The centers meet the requirements of the laws and regulations concerning childcare centres in Quebec.

A 14 month college level educator's training has been offered at least once in all communities. KRG continues to offer training to the directors, board of directors, janitors, cooks, finance personnel as well as bus drivers. Refresher courses for the first aid training and janitors training are done annually.

Today, there are a total of 814 subsidized childcare places in Nunavik.

Lisa Epoo, head of the Kativik Regional Government's childcare section says "There is a tremendous commitment by all Nunavik organizations as well as provincial and federal agencies. Our children are our future. The children are our greatest resource. Whatever we can invest in our children today will have a great impact on the outcome of the future of Nunavik and I want to personally thank everyone involved in such an important endeavor. "

The Kativik Regional Government (KRG) is a non-ethnic public organization created in 1978, under the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement, whose jurisdiction covers nearly the entire territory of Quebec north of the 55th parallel. The KRG administers the affairs of Nunavik in the areas of municipal affairs, transportation, environment, police, employment, manpower training, income security, childcare services, renewable resources, land-use management, civil security and economic development.

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